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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
TO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0695  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8922  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 0696  
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH IMMEDIATE 9662  
RUEHRH/CHUSMTM RIYADH SA IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/COMUSCENTAF SHAW AFB SC IMMEDIATE  
RHRMAKS/COMUSNAVCENT IMMEDIATE  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 RIYADH 001205

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CENTCOM FOR GEN PETRAEUS; DEPARTMENT FOR S/I, NEA/ARP AND  
NEA/I; BAGHDAD FOR AMB CROCKER, MNF-I CG GEN ODIERNO AND  
RFORD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/05/2018  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [MCA](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SA](#)  
SUBJECT: SAUDI MFA OFFICIAL ON IRAQ

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2306  
[1](#)B. WALKER-GFOELLER AUG 4 E-MAIL  
[1](#)C. RIYADH 1150  
[1](#)D. RIYADH 1034  
[1](#)E. RIYADH 767  
[1](#)F. RIYADH 708  
[1](#)G. RIYADH 649

Classified By: Charge' d'Affaires Michael Gfoeller  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (S/NF) SUMMARY. The Saudis support USG policy and strategy  
in establishing a stable Iraq. However, the Saudis remain  
extremely distrustful of PM Maliki and highly concerned over  
Iranian influence there. Therefore, they are still hesitant,  
at least for the interim, to commit any political capital or  
monetary funds for Iraqi reconstruction, including I-CERP.  
END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (S/NF) In a routine meeting on Aug. 5 to discuss overall  
bilateral issues, A/Pol Counselor and Saudi MFA Western  
Affairs Department Dr. Ra'ed Krimley engaged in a frank  
discussion of Iraq and related security issues. Krimley  
emphasized repeatedly he was expressing Saudi King Abdullah  
bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's views.

[1](#)3. (S/NF) Krimley admitted that the Iraqi security situation  
was continually improving, offering that the MFA is in the  
selection process for a Saudi Ambassador to Iraq, although he  
gave no information on when one would be appointed. However,  
he repeated the SAG's, including King Abdullah's personal,  
distrust of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki. Krimley  
noted that after Maliki's return from his most recent visit  
to Tehran, Maliki began publicly calling for a reduction in  
U.S. troops in Iraq and for a harder line regarding the  
proposed Status of Forces Agreement. A/Pol Counselor,  
referencing previous discussions with the SAG, strongly urged  
the Saudis to contribute to I-CERP as soon as possible. In  
his response, Krimley was non-committal about when funds  
would be made available. Krimley did acknowledge that Saudi  
Chief of General Intelligence Prince Muqrin Bin Abdulaziz Al

Saud and Iraqi National Security Advisor Mowaffaq Rubaie had been in regular contact. But this had been solely for intelligence sharing, not for Saudi-funded aid/reconstruction-related projects in Iraq.

¶4. (S/NF) Discussion turned to the upcoming Iraqi provincial elections. Krimley agreed that these elections are a necessary next step for national Iraqi reconciliation. He acknowledged that the SAG has links to various Sunni and Shia groups in Iraq. That said, he claimed the SAG has minimal political influence with them. Krimley opined that the Islamic Supreme Council in Iraq (ISCI) leader Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim was "more clever" than Office of the Martyr Sadr (OMS) leader Muqtada al-Sadr. He offered that Hakim was "biding his time" until U.S. forces eventually draw down in Iraq, when ISCI would begin to exert its "own influence on the Iraqi political structure." Krimley, while criticizing the U.S. decision to effect regime change in Iraq, stressed that the U.S. must maintain a strong military presence in Iraq to "ensure security for everyone."

¶5. (S/NF) COMMENT. Krimley is currently the highest-ranking MFA policy official still in the Kingdom. He is a protégé and close advisor of Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal, who works directly for the minister and is frequently seen in Saud al-Faisal's office. Although we cannot be sure that Krimley's comments accurately reflect the views of the King and the Foreign Minister, it is quite probable that they do.

¶6. (S/NF) Krimley's comments match what we have been long

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hearing from the SAG. King Abdullah's vehement distrust of Maliki colors the SAG's relationship with the GOI. The Saudis remain extremely concerned over Iran's intentions in the region, and particularly fearful of Iran achieving de facto control of Iraq. They recognize the importance of a stable Iraq being able to counter Iranian expansionism. Therefore, they strongly favor a continued U.S. military commitment in Iraq and are worried about the effect of a precipitous U.S. withdrawal. They want Iraq to develop into a stable, secular, Arab-ruled neighbor free of Iranian influence or overt Shia extremism. They will likely, at least for the interim, maintain a wait and see attitude towards Iraq until they develop more trust in the GOI and are assured of a lasting U.S. presence in Iraq. Despite Krimley's non-committal approach, we believe there is value to continue to address the Saudis to contribute to I-CERP.  
END COMMENT.  
GFOELLER